

Obama - Beware of Elites' bearing Gifts

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The McCain-Palin dragon has been slain. The Heroic Knight has been crowned and an era of profound hope has descended on the Kingdom. I know this is true because all my friends tell me so. There can be no doubt of the immense and genuine popularity of our new President-elect. Not even JFK inspired as much hope and devotion in his followers, nor was his following as universal.

So great is this enthusiasm for Obama here that I find I must hold my tongue in polite company, lest I upset someone by expressing my reservations. Nonetheless, there are several inconvenient truths that need to be said. First among these is the observation that Obama is not a populist. That is, he was not a candidate, like Ron Paul or Ralph Nader, whose race was a fight against the establishment. Obama had the full support of the establishment at every step of the way. Paul Street sums this up well enough:

But, as The New York Times' editors certainly know, "they" still "put in who they want to put in" to no small extent. The predominantly white U.S. business and political establishment still makes sure that nobody who questions dominant domestic and imperial hierarchies and doctrines can make a serious ("viable") run for higher office - the presidency, above all. It does this by denying adequate campaign funding (absolutely essential to success in an age of super-expensive, media-driven campaigns) and favorable media treatment (without which a successful campaign is unimaginable at the current stage of corporate media consolidation and power) to candidates who step beyond the narrow boundaries of elite opinion. Thanks to these critical electoral filters and to the legally mandated U.S. winner-take-all "two party" system [2], a candidate who even remotely questions corporate and imperial power is not permitted to make a strong bid for the presidency.

"Barack Obama is no exception to the rule. Anyone who thinks he could have risen to power without prior and ongoing ruling class approval is living in a dream world." — Paul Street, "Barack Obama as a Ruling Class Candidate"

<http://www.zmag.org/znet/viewArticle/19343>

Obama was sold to us, not just as a President but as a savior. The McCain-Palin charade was an important part of the sales campaign: you can't have an Heroic Knight unless there's a Fearsome Dragon to be slain. A friend pointed out to me that McCain's campaign was mostly negative attacks on Obama. Another way to frame that is to say that the campaign was all about Obama, rather than about issues. The negative attacks caused just as much bonding between Obama and his followers as did Obama's inspiring speeches. The negative and the positive themes were played against one another, in the media, with all the precision of a symphony.

Phony media circuses are nothing new to Presidential campaigns. With Obama, we saw a new dimension added, with the help of the Internet. I speak of the volunteer phenomenon. I was surprised to learn how many of my friends and acquaintances were active as volunteers in the campaign. They organized themselves at the grassroots, and they got their commands from Campaign Central, via email. Not since the heyday of Est have I seen such wild-eyed enthusiasm among activist volunteers. Even before I saw news reports that Obama planned to make political use of his Internet activists from a new White House Internet office, I heard my friends saying that the 'organization must go on', that it 'must not die with campaign'. They are eager to remain part of the bandwagon, to be troopers for Obama, and Obama is prepared to make use of them.

What we have is basically a personality cult. Obama true-believers are now bigger than the Fundamentalists, and equally mobilized. But what is it they are going to be mobilized for? The campaign rhetoric was to a large extent about 'overcoming divisiveness', and 'bringing us all together'. Sounds good, but divisiveness is not among the major problems facing America. The problems facing us are economic and environmental collapse, the struggle to hold onto empire, and new emerging powers on the global scene. Divisiveness was, and remains, a created issue, a cult-formation device, a device for which McCain and Palin, and their over-the-top redneck rallies, were a critical ingredient.

The other main themes of the campaign were 'change' and 'hope'. Interesting. Change we will get, of one kind or another, that's for sure. And there are two kinds of hope, that which arises in times of positive change, and that which arises in times of despair. If you see light at the end of the tunnel, you feel hope; if the tunnel remains dark, you rely on hope. Which kind of hope will Obama deliver? His followers have been led to feel there is light at the end of the tunnel. I suggest they are destined for disappointment. Hope for positive change will morph into a reliance on 'hope in Obama'.

As things get worse, we will take comfort that Obama 'understands our plight', is 'one of us', and is 'doing all he can'. Indeed, we will be dutifully emailing our representatives, to support this or that Obama legislation. As to the actual dark tunnel we are entering, here are a few recent articles that have come my way:

Stephen Lendman, Worse Than The Great Depression?

<http://www.countercurrents.org/lendman171108.htm>

Paul Craig Roberts, The Crisis Has Hardly Begun

<http://www.countercurrents.org/roberts171108.htm>

Economic Crisis Is Beyond The Reach Of Traditional Solutions

<http://www.countercurrents.org/roberts141108.htm>

Michel Chossudovsky, The Great Depression of the 21st Century:
Collapse of the Real Economy

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=10977>

I've recently published lots of other articles relevant to these pivotal times:

<http://groups.google.com/group/newslog/topics>

Our scenario is very much like that preceding the establishment of the Federal Reserve in 1913. The 'problem' then, as now, is a scary, engineered 'collapse'. The 'solution', then as

now, is the greater centralization of banking in private hands, now some kind of IMF cum Central Bank on a global scale. In both cases the promise is to avoid future collapses, while the reality is increased enslavement to banking elites. Some background material:

Richard C. Cook, The G-20 Economic Summit Won't Change the "Financial Crime Scene"
<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=10987>

Telegraph UK, Gordon Brown calls for new world order to beat recession
<http://tinyurl.com/5cqhd>

To my way of thinking, the proper response to the financial collapse would be to place all the big financial institutions under national receivership. They created the crisis through fraudulent practices, and bailing them out should be the furthest thing from our minds. The nations of the world can figure out who legitimately owes who what, figure out some way to settle up, and establish new sounder bases for currencies. That's what the G-20 could have been doing, but of course they didn't.

If anyone still doubts that the banking elites run things from behind the scenes, the past few months should have opened their eyes. Instead of a rational response, based on bringing the financial institutions under control, we have a capitulation to banking interests, symbolized by the installation of Henry Paulson as US Economic Czar, the same Paulson who helped engineer the subprime virus while at Goldman Sachs. The bailout, which has become a global phenomenon, is a crime against humanity, a betrayal of whatever democratic principles remained in our societies.

Humanity is the patient, and capitalism (ie, rule by capitalist elites) is the disease. The agenda of our leaders, and Obama will be no exception, is to sacrifice the patient so that the disease may survive. The agenda will include an expansion of genocide in the third world, assisted by the biofuel market and runaway food prices, and it will most likely include a nuclear confrontation with Russia and perhaps China. As Kissinger says, you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. Final consolidation of global power is an omelette worth many a sacrifice, particularly if you get to eat the omelette and aren't the one making the sacrifices.

Does all of this stuff sound irrelevant to Obama and the issues of the campaign? It should, for the campaign and Obama's rhetoric have nothing to do with the problems we will be facing, and nothing to do with the agenda Obama brings to the office. The rhetoric was a conjured illusion, a bit like LBJ promising not to escalate in Vietnam, or Clinton promising universal health care. The difference between Obama and those precedents is that Obama has the capacity to carry his followers with him. Whereas we all felt abandoned and betrayed by LBJ, Obama has the charisma to carry his flock willingly into the abyss as he makes 'difficult but necessary' choices.

Part of the architecture of a fascist regime is a mobilized grassroots following. The motivating characteristics vary with the culture. Ethnic hatreds and a resurgence of nationalism are not the American way. Obama shows us the American way, with his organized network of followers. His skill, and his value to elites, will be his ability to get us to take our kool-aid voluntarily.

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